



Spring 2002

# Finding the Balance

*A Publication of the Indiana Land Resources Council*

## Indiana Land Resources Council

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## We Have An Obligation to Provide Sound Information on Land Use Issues and Resources

*A message from Lt. Governor Joe Kernan, ILRC Chair*

Agriculture is an important part of our Hoosier heritage, but land use isn't just about farmland. It encompasses the landscape in cities, suburbs, rural communities — and the transportation zones between town and country.

As chairman of the Indiana Land Resources Council, I am working with some extremely dedicated people representing all aspects of land use issues in Indiana who agree: sound land use decisions should not be left to chance.

Members of the Indiana Land Resources Council recognize the importance and scope of the council's charge to provide information, technical support and advice to the citizens of Indiana on land use and land resource decisions. These nine individuals agree that the wise use of land and natural resources is critical to the future of our state.

Whether you live in rural or urban Indiana, you have most likely encountered a land use situation the ILRC and its partnering organizations are addressing. These issues include brownfield and urban

redevelopment, forest fragmentation, septic system failure, water quality, economic development, community growth, farmland preservation and community planning.

There are no easy answers. Each community requires different and creative solutions. The challenge, however, is to determine how communities — both rural and urban — can grow without losing the features that make them attractive in the first place.

In communities nationwide, a renewed and re-energized focus has been placed on long-term strategic planning and com-

munity sustainability. Communities are beginning to realize the challenges uncontrolled growth brings to the viability of their urban cores and rural fringes.

Communication is the key. That is why the ILRC will use *Finding the Balance*, our new quarterly newsletter, as one tool to inform and enlighten citizens and stakeholders on land use issues. The council is committed to developing strategies that will foster community and economic growth while promoting environmental protection and preserving our way of life.



*Lt. Governor Joe Kernan, ILRC chair (far right) talks with council members Mary McConnell and Sam Smith about land use strategies and preservation tools used around the country.*

## Indiana's Brownfields Program Offering New Cleanup Incentive



*The brownfield above received site assessment grant funding through the Brownfields Program in the past, and has since been redeveloped into a shopping strip mall. Although PRGI funding was not available at the time, this site is typical of those that would be eligible for PRGI funding.*

The Indiana Brownfields Program — a collaborative effort between the Indiana Development Finance Authority, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management and the Indiana Department of Commerce — is excited about a new funding incentive for brownfields redevelopment called the Petroleum Remediation Grant Incentive (PRGI).

In the recently passed 2002/2003 Indiana state budget, \$9 million was transferred

from the Excess Liability Trust Fund (ELTF) to the Brownfields Fund. These funds will be made available for awards prior to June 30, 2003, and will be used specifically for the

cleanup of petroleum-contaminated brownfield sites around Indiana.

Key points of the Petroleum Remediation Grant Incentive include:

- Funding will be distributed directly to cities, towns and counties.
- There will be two funding rounds: one during the summer of 2002, and again in

early 2003.

- PRGI funding will not be available to parties who caused or contributed to contamination at brownfields sites under consideration. Funding will not be retroactive; environmental remediation activities conducted prior to the application and award are not eligible for reimbursement.
- The activities to be funded by the PRGI will be remedial, not investigative, in nature. In order for a brownfields site to be eligible for PRGI funding, site-specific environmental data (e.g. Phase I and II site assessment reports) must be available. In part, the competitiveness of an individual PRGI application will be proportional to the amount of environmental data available and submitted for the brownfields site being considered.
- The PRGI has been intentionally designed to avoid benefiting sites and/or constituents otherwise eligible for the ELTF Program.
- Maximum PRGI assistance will be \$250,000 per project, per applicant, per round. Those projects with costs above \$250,000 must show where the additional funding will come from in order to complete the remedial activities.

For further information on this program, visit the Indiana Development Finance Authority Web site at [www.in.gov/idfa/programs/brp.html](http://www.in.gov/idfa/programs/brp.html).

## April's Ultimate Farmland Preservation Tour Provides Great Learning Experience

The Midwest is home to the nation's cornbelt and the most productive agricultural soils in the country. Illinois ranks first in the percentage of prime farmland with 59% of its land area considered ideal for raising crops, Indiana is second with 58%, Iowa ranks third with 52%, Ohio and Kansas are tied for fourth with 45%.

But the Midwest is not the leader when it comes to utilizing creative land use tools to protect rural and urban areas. Maryland, Pennsylvania and New Jersey are taking the lead in that category.

That's why bus loads of Midwesterners made the trek to these eastern seaboard

states to learn about farmland preservation and other land use tools in what's known as the *Ultimate Farmland Tour*.

During the first week of April, 44 Hoosiers, along with people from Ohio and Michigan, set out for the east coast. They toured farms, listened to local residents and spoke with government representatives. It was an intense, but rewarding trip.

Since the early 70s, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland have "seen the light." Farmland has been urbanized at an alarming rate — causing state governments to act. What has been accomplished in those three states has taken cooperation and compro-

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## Southern Indiana's Forest Discovery Center Hosted the ILRC's May Meeting



*John Rosenbarger (standing) New Albany Redevelopment Commission, made a presentation to the ILRC on the urban brownfield revitalization project being completed in his jurisdiction.*

mise from all stakeholders. Each party realized there was a serious situation and came to develop sound solutions, not quick fixes.

Joe Tutterrow, executive director of the Indiana Land Resources Council, says the tools being used in these eastern states provide us with valuable information.

“These states have been working on land use issues for 30 years,” Tutterrow states.

“Elected officials, community leaders and citizens all realized they must be active participants in the process. They established programs that provide options and incentives for landowners,” adds Tutterrow.

“They’ve made land use a priority by

dedicating state funds and other resources to support these programs. In short, they recognize land is a limited resource that must be protected.”

While it is difficult to compare Indiana to Maryland, it is clear Hoosiers must plan for the future.

“Learning how to preserve our farmland is probably the most important thing we can do for agriculture in this generation,” remarks Indiana State Senator David Ford, one of the tour’s organizers.

“One of the main reasons this trip is so valuable is the potential we have to learn from their successes, as well as from their failures,” notes Tutterrow. “We have a lot of information to process and build on.”

The Indiana Land Resources Council (ILRC) moved its May meeting away from the state capital – 150 miles south in fact – so they could get a better feel for land use issues at the local level.

The council’s May 22 meeting at The Forest Discovery Center in Clark County provided a great perspective on land use issues in southern Indiana – and managed to bring local stakeholders closer together.

Community planners, county officials, area builders, farmers and resource managers from Clark, Floyd and Harrison counties were invited to share their ideas and challenges with the ILRC.

“Everyone agreed – communication and planning are critical components to the land use discussion,” said Joe Tutterrow, ILRC executive director. “Even people at the local level don’t always have adequate communications when it comes to land use issues.

“Our May meeting helped local stakeholders get better acquainted with each other, and it helped open their lines of communication. Officials discovered they have a lot in common and need to work together,” Tutterrow emphasized.

“Land use decisions are best made at the local level, so the ILRC must provide communities with better access to technical information, referrals for assistance and additional funding sources for planning

projects,” said Lt. Governor Joe Kernan, council chair. “Land use decisions made today are irreversible, that’s why they must be good ones.”

Local leaders from Clark, Floyd and Harrison counties provided information on growth trends and land use issues unique to southern Indiana. Two common themes among all presenters was a concern about their future quality of life, and just as important, a current lack of dialogue among officials and citizens at the local level.

Local presenters at the council’s May 22 meeting included:

■ **Clark County:**

David Lewis, County Commissioner  
Jana Ecker, City of Jeffersonville

■ **Floyd County:**

Greg Gapsis, Plan Commission president  
Carl Malysz, director of the New Albany Plan Commission  
John Rosenbarger, New Albany Redevelopment Commission  
Al Spotts, New Directions Housing Corporation, Louisville, Ky.

■ **Harrison County:**

Eric Wise, Harrison County Staff Planner  
Jim Klintstiver, County Plan Commission  
Scott Adams, Home Builders Association of Southern Indiana

■ **State Government Partners:**

Gary Conant, Historic Hoosier Hills Resource, Conservation & Development Council



## Three Things We Can Embrace to Protect Our Land

By Don Strietelmeier, ILRC Member and Farmer, Bartholomew County

*Scenery around the state provides powerful information about the changes occurring to Hoosier communities.*

When I have the opportunity to travel around Indiana I prefer to do it during the day. I can see, enjoy and learn more about this state. The scenery provides powerful information about the changes occurring to communities around Indiana.

Different areas of the state offer a variety of landscapes. This includes productive farmland, wooded hills and valleys, small towns, larger cities, lakes and streams. Each area also includes the homes of Indiana residents who work to support their families and build and sustain their communities.

Most of these individuals are looking beyond today with hope for the future and a good quality of life—for themselves and future generations that follow.

As a member of the Indiana Land Resources Council, we are providing resources and guidance for Hoosiers to assure we use and enjoy the resources of this state wisely and efficiently. In order to accomplish this I've outlined three areas we can em-



Don Strietelmeier

brace in our every day lives to ensure responsible land use.

- Seek **information**. It is necessary to make sound land use decisions. Each ILRC member brings unique background and expertise in land use to the table. We also embrace and search for additional information and resources to complete the land use picture.
- Embrace **education**—sharing and disseminating this information and resources is key. The ILRC's goal is to communicate sound information on land use to Hoosiers—that includes private citizens, and local and state government officials. Education serves little benefit unless it is put into practice.
- Practice **stewardship** of Indiana's land resources. How we use or misuse this limited and valuable resource impacts the quality of life and the productive potential for years to come. We can be well informed and well educated, but it will be wise stewardship that provides the best opportunity for Indiana's future.

Join me and members of the ILRC on our journey. Council meetings are open to the public. We encourage your input and support. For meeting dates and ILRC information, visit our Web site at

[www.in.gov/oca/ilrc](http://www.in.gov/oca/ilrc).

## About the Indiana Land Resources Council

The purpose of the Indiana Land Resources Council is to collect information and provide assistance and advice to local governments regarding land use strategies and issues across the state. The Indiana General Assembly, under IC 15-7-9-6, identified nine goals for the council:

- Provide technical assistance and information about land use strategies.
- Facilitate collaboration among commonly affected state, county and local government units.
- Compile and maintain a land use planning information library, both hard copy and electronic, that includes current data on land resources in Indiana.
- Establish or coordinate educational programs for governmental units, non-governmental units, and the public—with special consideration for local planning commission members and county commissioners.
- Provide counties and local communities conducting land use planning with access to technical and legal assistance through a referral service.
- Provide information to local authorities on model ordinances for programs and techniques on land use.
- Obtain grants and assist counties and local communities in locating additional funding sources for planning projects.
- Make recommendations to the legislature and other governmental bodies concerning land resources.
- Advise the legislature, when requested, on proposals relating to land resources.

For more information on the ILRC, call (317) 234-5262, or visit [www.in.gov/oca/ilrc](http://www.in.gov/oca/ilrc).

